

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A database system for storing data comprising Extensible Markup Language (XML) instances, said database system comprising:

- a processor;
- a computer readable storage medium having program code that causes said processor to perform a plurality of operations, said operations comprising:
 - ~~program code executable by said processor for~~ generating a container for XML schema namespaces;
 - ~~program code executable by said processor for~~ associating at least two XML schema namespace universal resource identifiers (URIs) with said container, at least one of said namespace URIs identifying a location of a schema document that defines a format for any of a plurality of XML instances conforming to said schema document;
 - ~~program code executable by said processor for~~ validating an XML instance according to ~~XML schema namespaces~~ a schema document identified by at least one of said namespace URIs;
 - ~~program code executable by said processor for~~ storing said a validated XML instance in a database column; and
 - ~~program code executable by said processor for~~ typing said database column with said container, and subsequently preventing the container from being removed from said database system unless said typing said database column is reversed, and wherein said typing comprises validating any XML instances existing in said database column prior to said typing.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The database system of claim 8, said computer readable storage medium further comprising program code executable by said processor that comprises an import function which modifies said container so that it refers to at least one

schema component in an XML schema namespace other than XML schema namespaces identified by said at least two XML schema namespace URIs.

11. (Currently Amended) The database system of claim 8, said computer readable storage medium further comprising program code executable by said processor that comprises an include function which ~~allows assembly of schema components for a single namespace from several schema documents~~ assembles URIs identified in a plurality of schema location attributes.

12. (Currently Amended) The database system of claim 8, said computer readable storage medium further comprising program code executable by said processor that comprises an alter function which adds schema components to XML schema namespaces within said container.

13-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method of validating Extensible Markup Language (XML) instances to ~~determine whether said XML instances may~~ be stored in a column of a relational database, said method comprising:

creating a container for XML schema namespaces, at least one of said namespaces identifying a location of a schema document that defines a format for any of a plurality of XML instances conforming to said schema document;

associating at least two XML schema namespaces with said container;

typing a column of a relational database with said container, and subsequently preventing the container from being removed from said relational database unless said typing said column is reversed, and wherein said typing comprises ensuring that any XML instances existing in said column prior to said typing conform to at least one schema document identified by a namespace in said container; and

ensuring, prior to storing an XML instance in said column, that the XML instance conforms to at least one schema associated with at least one of said at least two XML schema namespaces; and

storing said XML instance in said column.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising modifying said container so that the container refers to schema components in other XML schema namespaces.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20, further comprising assembling ~~schema components for a single namespace to be associated with said container from several schema documents~~ respective namespaces for a plurality of schema location attributes.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising adding schema components to XML schema namespaces within said container for XML schema namespaces.

24. (Original) The method of claim 20, further comprising locating a schema that is referred to by an XML schema namespace in the container for XML schema namespaces.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium comprising computer readable modules having computer executable instructions for interfacing with a storage location for storing XML instances in a computing system, the modules comprising:
computer readable instructions for collecting a plurality of XML schema namespaces in a container for XML schema namespaces, at least one of said XML schema namespaces identifying a location of a schema document that defines a format for any of a plurality of XML instances conforming to said schema document;

computer readable instructions for typing said database column with said container, and subsequently preventing the container from being removed from said database unless said typing said column is reversed, and wherein said typing comprises validating that any XML instances existing in said column prior to said typing conform to at least one schema document identified by a namespace in said container;

computer readable instructions for validating prior to storing an XML instance in said column that ~~an~~ the XML instance conforms to a schema identified by said XML schema namespaces; and

computer readable instructions for storing said XML instance is in said database column.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, further comprising computer readable instructions for modifying said container so that said container refers to schema components in other XML schema namespaces.

28. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, further comprising computer readable instructions that ~~allows assembly of schema components for a single namespace from several schema documents~~ assemble namespaces for a plurality of schema location attributes.

29. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, further comprising computer readable instructions that adds schema components to XML schema namespaces within at least one of said one or more containers for XML schema namespaces.

30. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, further comprising computer readable instructions that locate a schema that is referred to by an XML schema namespace in the container for XML schema namespaces.

31 – 36. (Canceled)